



Big boost for coastal aquaculture in state



Fish seed being stocked into cages installed in a lake near Cherthala, Alappuzha

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Kochi

Coastal aquaculture in Kerala is all set to get a major boost from the cage fish farming model being popularised across the state under the technical guidance of the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI).

Even many people from the non-farming community have turned to this less-expensive fish farming model after getting the technical and capacity enhancement training from the CMFRI.

After the training, the participants hailing from different parts of the state have started farming of commercially important fish varieties such as pearl spot, sea bass, red snapper, tilapia and giant trevally in the brackish and fresh water bodies in their respective regions. Besides Ernakulam, where the maximum number of cage farming enterprises are in operation, the initiative has been started in six other districts - Kannur, Malappuram, Thrissur, Alappuzha, Kottayam and Kollam.

It was the success story of cage fish farming venture at Pizhala in Ernakulam that attracted more people, including non-farmers, into the cage farming culture, said Imelda Joseph, head of Mariculture Division. "There are around 100 farming units on Pizhala Island, being operated under the guidance of CMFRI," she said.

CMFRI opens research centre in West Bengal

Kochi: Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI) has opened a new regional research centre at Digha in West Bengal, for fulfilling the research and development requirements of West Bengal and Odisha in marine fisheries. The facility will primarily focus on assessing the important commercial marine fish stocks, especially 'hilsa,' in West Bengal. It will conduct research activities for conservation and sustainable harvest of the fish species and develop effective resource management practices. The centre will provide advisory to the Bengal and Odisha governments on optimising the number of fishing vessels. It will also carry out regular monitoring and make assessment of fish stocks to help management of fish resources in the region.

"Two years ago, the farmers in Kerala were not much interested in investing money in cage culture, but now the situation has changed considerably. People from across the state are approaching CMFRI expressing their willingness to begin cage farming enterprises. This is a positive sign Kerala is moving towards a fish revolution by using its highly prospective water resources," Imelda said.